

September 22, 2021

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

From: Paula Boggs Muething, City Manager

202102811

Subject: Mental Health Services Available to Law Enforcement Officers

REFERENCE DOCUMENT #202100943

On March 16, 2021, the Law and Public Safety Committee referred the following for a report:

MOTION, (AMENDED), submitted by Councilmember Keating, Goodin, Mann, Kearney and Vice Mayor Smitherman, Police officers experience multiple traumatic events throughout their entire career. A study in 2015 showed that the average law enforcement officers experience 188 critical incidents over the extent of their career. In response to the trauma, they see in their everyday lives, law enforcement officers can turn to negative coping mechanisms, experience symptoms of and/or develop PTSD, as well as other mental health disorders adding unneeded and additional stress to their already stressful profession. Accordingly, WE MOVE that the Administration provide a full report regarding the mental health services available to law enforcement officers, including but not limited to counseling services, mental health training, and emotional health training. * Moreover, WE MOVE that the Administration provide an additional report on the number of officers who are currently utilizing the mental health... (BALANCE OF MOTION ON FILE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE).

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

On July 20, 2021, the Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) rolled out the mobile app CordicoShield Wellness for employees of CPD, the City's Emergency Communication Center (ECC) and the Cincinnati Fire Department (CFD). This app provides on-demand confidential peer support 24 hours a day, anonymous self-assessments tools targeting critical incidents, depression, and suicide risk, with geo-mapping of vetted therapists and one-touch calling. CPD continues to promote the app via email and the distribution of marketing materials at roll call and in-person trainings.

This new mobile app complements the City's Public Employee Assistance Program and the following mental health resources available to CPD, ECC, and CFD.

- **Trained Peer Support Team:** comprised of approximately 80 sworn and civilian personnel who provide confidential on-demand assistance to handle a variety of personal and professional stress, and operates confidentially with the support of the Department. CPD codeveloped and sits on the board of the Tristate First Responder Peer Support Team, which provides access to nearly a hundred trained peers from outside agencies of varying disciplines (police, fire, dispatch, EMS, corrections, etc.) for employees more comfortable with outside peer support.

- **Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team:** a cooperative team of 28 CPD employees and University of Cincinnati Police Officers certified by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation and registered with the Ohio Critical Incident Stress Network. These peers receive specialized training to help employees cope with trauma exposure and critical incidents and are “deployed” immediately following a critical incident to begin ongoing and continuous employee support. Confidentiality for this team is protected under Ohio Revised Code. The next training for new CISM members will be held in late September and is open to ECC employees.
- **Police Clergy Team:** under the direction of Rev. Mark Pruden, who has experience in counseling and in religious leadership and is widely respected by CPD Officers as a valuable resource.
- **Military Liaison Support Group:** connects CPD veterans with mental health resources through the VA.

Outside mental health resources primarily referred to by CPD peer support teams are:

- **Beckett Springs Help for Heroes Program:** Beckett Springs Hospital is a 24/7 mental health hospital which can assess an employee for multiple levels of care from inpatient to outpatient treatment. This is the Peer Team’s and FOP’s preferred facility for an officer in crisis needing to be admitted for psychiatric care and receives excellent reviews from officers and dispatchers completing the Help for Heroes program.
- **UC Stress Center:** treats PTSD and cumulative stress and was developed to provide evidence-based care for the first responder population. This facility, which comes highly recommended by officers, accepts City insurance and offers a gap fund to assist with out-of-pocket expenses so officers can receive care at this facility at no out-of-pocket charge.
- **Pinpoint Behavioral Health:** a group of clinicians with first responder backgrounds (many were officers, EMTs or veterans) who also provide services to families of officers. They offer unconventional treatment settings such as outdoor “adventure therapy” or “equine therapy,” which can alleviate some of the apprehension associated with a traditional therapy setting.
- **Gary Lee, LISW:** a retired Cincinnati Police Captain, Gary Lee is now a practicing therapist with extensive insight into first responder culture. Mr. Lee primarily sees first responders in his practice and serves as a consultant for the Help for Heroes program.
- **Whole Health Behavioral:** specializing in first responder treatment, this mental health group is a preferred resource of the state and local FOP.
- **Helping Heroes Heal:** this nonprofit organization started as a grassroots meeting of local first responders, veterans, and other medical care professionals looking to support mental health and each other. The program now has a sitting clinician at all monthly meetings for attendees needing more intensive care than simply group support.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE TO ALL CITY OF CINCINNATI EMPLOYEES

The Public Employees Assistance Program (PEAP) is a professional counseling service, free of charge, for full and part-time City employees and their family members, and helps employees resolve problems that might affect personal well-being and job performance. PEAP now has 2 counselors certified in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic events. A tri-fold brochure about EMDR is attached. Normal PEAP office hours are 8:30am-5:00pm weekdays; however, counseling appointments are available in the evenings along with a 24-hour emergency answering service. Employees can get help from PEAP by calling 513-421-7600.

Full-time employees enrolled in the City's group insurance plan can take advantage of behavioral health treatments, mental health, and substance use disorder services, as these services are considered "essential health benefits" under the City's plan and are not subject to lifetime or annual dollar maximums. The following services are covered under the City's plan:

- Inpatient services in a hospital or any facility including psychotherapy, psychological testing, electroconvulsive therapy, and detoxification.
- Residential treatment in a licensed residential treatment center that offers individualized and intensive treatment and includes observation and assessment by a physician weekly or more often, rehabilitation, and therapy.
- Outpatient services including office visits, therapy and treatment, partial hospitalization/day treatment programs, intensive outpatient programs and intensive in-home behavioral health services.
- Online medical visits with a doctor – such as Live Health Online.
- Examples of providers covered include psychiatrist, psychologist, neuropsychologist, independent social workers, professional clinical counselors, professional counselors, licensed clinical social worker (L.C.S.W.), mental health clinical nurse specialist, licensed marriage, and family therapist (L.M.F.T.), licensed professional clinical counselor (L.P.C.C.) or any agency licensed by the state to give these services.

SUMMARY

As of July 2021, a new customized mobile app is now available for CPD, ECC, and CFD through CordicoShield Wellness that provides on-demand wellness support specially developed for law enforcement, firefighters, and dispatchers. CordicoShield provides anonymous peer support, instructional videos, geo-mapping of vetted therapists with one-touch calling, and on-demand behavioral health and cognitive strength tools that target trauma and stress response, suicide risk and prevention, and much more. This new mobile app complements services available to CPD through the City's group insurance plan, the City's Public Employee Assistance Program, and CPD's peer support teams.

Attachment